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Say sorry, we'll call off strike

Launch owners tell govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Launch owners yesterday agreed to call off their indefinite wildcat strike today if the government finding nothing wrong with their papers apologised.

At a meeting with the government, the launch owners claimed that the launches had valid papers, but still were fined last week.

They asked the shipping secretary to check it out at the Sadarghat

launch terminal.

The launch owners said the government will have to say sorry in the presence of mediators if the papers were found valid. But when asked to comment on the matter, Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain said there was no need for the government to say sorry to the launch owners.

"Rather, the magistrate will check all the launches to find out whether they have necessary papers," he

added. "It's up to them to decide whether they will call off the strike."

Gias Uddin Mamun, senior vice-president of the Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carriers) Association, said, "The shipping minister has undermined our position before the entire nation by saying that we have been running the business without valid papers. But this is not true. So the authorities

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Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation launched a special bus service on the Dhaka-Barisal route from Sadarghat yesterday, offering passengers alternative transport amid an indefinite strike by private launch operators.

Keraniganj double murder Court rejects govt order to drop charges against Pintu's brother

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected a home ministry order for withdrawal of murder charges against the brother of the ruling BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and nine others.

Pintu's brother Reazuddin Ahmed Monir and the rest were implicated in the Keraniganj double murder case.

Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge

Jahangir Alam Mollah rejected the order after scrutinising the documents.

In his order, the judge said the government did not mention why the charges should be withdrawn. Moreover, the contents of the FIR, charge sheet and decisions of the higher courts did not suggest that it was a case of political harassment.

Earlier, the home ministry sent a letter to the Dhaka Metropolitan

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Joypurhat incident 2 more militants held, group planned jihad

ANWAR ALL, Joypurhat

Two more suspects were arrested and property of three leaders of the Islamist militant outfit, the Jama'atul Mujahidin, was attached yesterday in Joypurhat where interrogators say the outfit was gathering to prepare to wage jihad (Islamic revolution).

With the arrests of Mahbubur Rahman and Mahfuzar Rahman by the joint forces conducting a comb-

ing operation in the region to track down the militants, the number of arrestees rose to 23.

Police attached the property of Montejar Rahman, his son-in-law Mahfuzar Rahman and uncle Delwar Hossain of Khetlal upazila. Montejar's house was being used as the venue of the gathering, which police raided early Friday following a firefight with the militants.

Police, however, did not release 12 villagers picked up Saturday for

interrogation.

Interrogators say nearly 150 operatives of the outlawed group congregated at Montejar's house at Moheshpur village in Khetlal.

The operatives, trained up at different camps across the country over the last six months, gathered there for further instructions by top leaders of the organisation.

The interrogators, who grilled

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Abductions, killings Ctg professionals demand army deployment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Leaders of different professional forums yesterday called for army deployment in Chittagong to check the law and order downside at a meeting that came on the heels of the recent killing of a businessman and abduction of another.

The meeting, organised by Chittagong Chamber of Commerce

and Industry (CCCI), also called for a CCCI-led anti-crime campaign to build awareness among people.

The participants of the meeting emphasised bringing criminals to book. Without proper trial and punishment of criminals, it is not possible to fight crime, the speakers said.

A political will is a must to help

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Buet goes soft on teacher's certificate forgery

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) seems mysteriously reluctant to take stern action against a teacher, who produced forged certificates for personal gains from the institution.

Terming the Buet syndicate 'mysteriously lenient', teachers and students expressed frustration at the way the disgraceful act of Dr Kazi Azizul Mawla was handled.

The syndicate finished its job by cancelling only his salary incre-

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Washington wants to see Dhaka exporting gas

STAR DESK

The United States wants to see Bangladesh exporting its natural gas so that it can become a middle-income country, the new US ambassador said here Sunday, reports AFP.

"It is a decision for the Bangladeshi government and the people to make," Ambassador Harry K. Thomas told reporters in his first meeting with the press.

"That said, we would like to see a

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US envoy Harry K. Thomas



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